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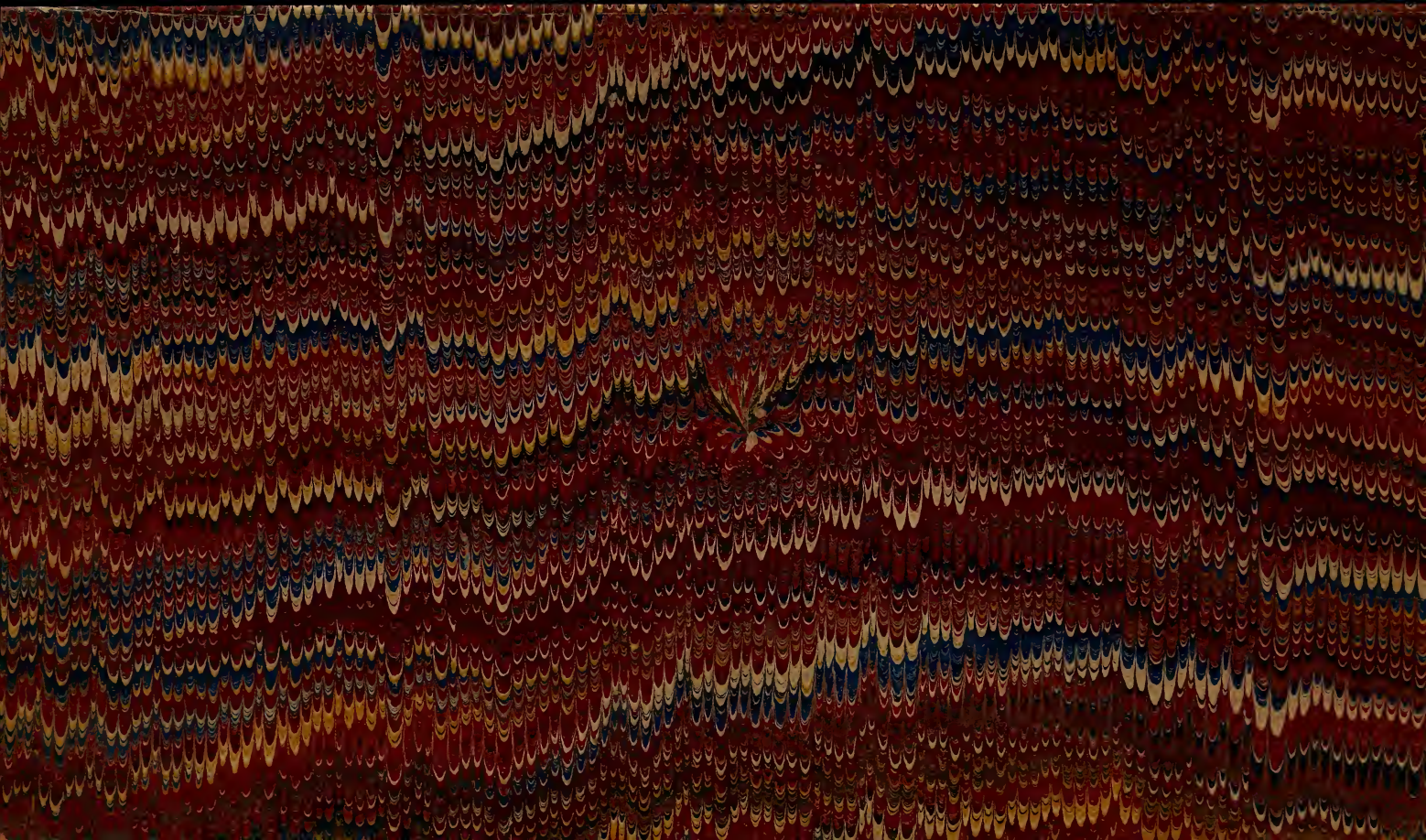


Marmor Norfolciense;

OR,

AN ESSAY

ON AN

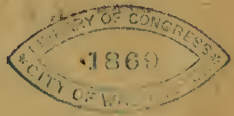
ANCIENT PROPHETICAL INSCRIPTION,

In Monkish Rhyme,

LATELY DISCOVERED NEAR LYNN, IN NORFOLK.

BY PROBUS BRITANICUS.

41 Sam. Johnson



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MARMOR NORFOLCIENSE;

AN ESSAY

BY SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

[This very curious and scarce Tract, by Dr. Samuel Johnson, (under the assumed name of PROBUS BRITANICUS,) has never appeared in any edition of the works of that celebrated writer.—Its authenticity is fully established by *Boswell*, (vol. i. p. 74—75, 4to, 1791,) and by *Hawkins*, (8vo, p. 70—71, 2nd edit.) to which the reader is referred.]

LONDON:

Printed for J. M. RICHARDSON, Cornhill.

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MARMOR NORFOLCIENSE,

&c. &c.

In Norfolk, near the town of Lynn, in a field which an antient tradition of the country affirms to have been once a deep lake or meer, and which appears from authentic records to have been called, about two hundred years ago, *Palus*, or the Marsh, was discovered not long since a large square stone, which is found upon an exact inspection to be a kind of coarse marble, of a substance not firm enough to admit of being polished, yet harder than our common quarries afford, and not easily susceptible of injuries from weather or outward accidents.

It was brought to light by a farmer, who, observing his plough obstructed by something, through

which the share could not make its way, ordered his servants to remove it. This was not effected without some difficulty, the stone being three feet four inches deep, and four feet square in the superficies, and consequently of a weight not easily manageable. However, by the application of levers, it was at length raised, and conveyed to a corner of the field, where it lay for some months entirely unregarded: nor, perhaps, had we ever been made acquainted with this venerable relique of antiquity, had not our good fortune been greater than our curiosity.

A gentleman, well known to the learned world, and distinguished by the patronage of the *Mæcenas* of *Norfolk*, whose name, was I permitted to mention it, would excite the attention of my reader, and add no small authority to my conjectures, observing, as he was walking that way, that the clouds began to gather and threaten him with a shower, had recourse for shelter to the trees under which this stone happened to lie, and sat down upon it in expectation of fair weather. At length, he began to amuse himself in his confinement, by clearing the earth from his seat with the point of his cane; and had continued this employment some time, when he observed several traces of letters antique and irregular,

which, by being very deeply engraven, were still easily distinguishable.

This discovery so far raised his curiosity, that, going home immediately, he procured an instrument for cutting out the clay that filled up the spaces of the letters, and with very little labour made the inscription legible, which is here exhibited to the public.

POST-GENITIS.

Cum Lapidem hunc, magni
Qui nunc jacet Incola stagni,

Vel Pede Equus tanget,
Vel Arator vomere franget,

Sentiet ægra Metus,
Effundet Patria Fletus,

Littoraque ut Fluctu,
Resonabunt Oppida Luctu:

Nam fœcunda rubri
Serpent per Prata Colubri,

Gramina vastantes,
Flores Fructusque vorantes,

Omnia fœdantes,
Vitiantes, et spoliantes;

Quanquam haud pugnaces,
Ibunt per cuncta Minaces.

Fures absque Timore,
Et pingues absque Labore,

Horrida dementes
Rapiet Discordia Gentes,
Plurima tunc Leges
Mutabit, plurima Reges
Natio, conversâ
In Rabiem tunc contremet Ursâ
Cynthia, tunc latis
Florebunt Lilia Pratis,
Nec fremere audebit
Leo, sed violare timebit,
Omnia consuetus
Populari Pascua lætus.
Ante Oculos Natos
Calceatos et Cruciatos.
Jam feret ignavus,
Vetitâque Libidine pravus.
En quoque quod Mirum,
Quod dicas denique dirum,
Sanguinem Equus sugit,
Neque Bellua victa remugit.

These lines he carefully copied, accompanied, in his Letter of July 19, with the following translation:

TO POSTERITY.

Whene'er this stone, now hid beneath the lake,
The horse shall trample, or the plough shall break,

Then, O my Country! shalt thou groan distrest,
Grief swell thine eyes, and terror chill thy breast.
Thy streets with violence of woe shall sound,
Loud as the billows bursting on the ground.
Then thro' thy fields shall scarlet reptiles stray,
And Rapine and Pollution mark their way.
Their hungry swarms the peaceful vale shall fright,
Still fierce to threaten, still afraid to fight;
The teeming year's whole product shall devour,
Insatiate pluck the fruit, and crop the flow'r:
Shall glutton on the industrious peasant's spoil,
Rob without fear, and fatten without toil.
Then o'er the world shall Discord stretch her wings,
Kings change their laws, and kingdoms change their kings.
The bear, enrag'd, th' affrighted moon shall dread;
The lilies o'er the vales triumphant spread;
Nor shall the lion, wont of old to reign
Despotic o'er the desolated plain,
Henceforth th' inviolable bloom invade,
Or dare to murmur in the flow'ry glade;
His tortur'd sons shall die before his face,
While he lies melting in a lewd embrace;
And yet, more strange! his veins a horse shall drain,
Nor shall the passive coward once complain.

I make not the least doubt, but that this learned person has given us, as an antiquary, a true and uncontrovertible representation of the wri-

ter's meaning, and am sure he can confirm it by innumerable quotations from the authors of the middle age, should he be publicly called upon by any man of eminent rank in the republic of letters; nor will he deny the world that satisfaction, provided the animadverter proceeds with that sobriety and modesty, with which it becomes every learned man to treat a subject of such importance.

Yet, with all proper deference to a name so justly celebrated, I will take the freedom of observing that he has succeeded better as a scholar than a poet; having fallen below the strength, the conciseness, and at the same time below the perspicuity, of his author. I shall not point out the particular passages in which this disparity is remarkable, but content myself with saying in general, that the criticisms, which there is room for on this translation, may be almost an incitement to some lawyer, studious of antiquity, to learn *Latin*.

The inscription which I now proceed to consider, wants no arguments to prove its antiquity, to those among the learned, who are versed in the writers of the darker ages, and know that the *Latin* poetry of those times was of a peculiar cast and air, not easy to be understood, and

very difficult to be imitated; nor can it be conceived that any man would lay out his abilities on a way of writing, which, though attained with much study, could gain him no reputation, and engrave his chimæras on a stone to astonish posterity.

Its antiquity therefore is out of dispute; but how high a degree of antiquity is to be assigned it, there is more ground for inquiry than determination. How early *Latin* rhymes made their appearance in the world is yet undecided by the critics. Verses of this kind were called *Leonine;* but whence they derived that appellation, the learned *Camden* confesses himself ignorant, so that the stile carries no certain marks of its age. I shall only observe farther on this head, that the characters are nearly of the same form with those on King *Arthur's* coffin; but whether from their similitude we may venture to pronounce them of the same date, I must refer to the decision of better judges.

Our inability to fix the age of this inscription necessarily infers our ignorance of its author, with relation to whom many controversies may be started, worthy of the most profound learning and most indefatigable diligence.

The first question that naturally arises is,

whether he was a *Briton* or a *Saxon*. I had at first conceived some hope, that in this question, in which not only the idle curiosity of virtuosos, but the honor of two mighty nations, is concerned, some information might be drawn from the word *Patria*, (my country,) in the third line; *England* being not in propriety of speech the country of the *Saxons;* at least, not at their first arrival. But upon farther reflection this argument appeared not conclusive, since we find that, in all ages, foreigners have affected to call *England* their country, even when, like the *Saxons* of old, they came only to plunder it.

An argument, in favour of the *Britons*, may indeed be drawn from the tenderness, with which the author seems to lament his country, and the compassion he shows for its approaching calamities. I, who am a descendant from the *Saxons*, and therefore unwilling to say any thing derogatory from the reputation of my forefathers, must yet allow this argument its full force: for it has been rarely, very rarely, known, that foreigners, however well treated, caressed, enriched, flattered, or exalted, have regarded this country with the least gratitude or affection, till the race has, by long continuance, after many generations, been naturalized and assimilated.

They have been ready upon all occasions to prefer the petty interests of their own country, though perhaps only some desolate and worthless corner of the world. They have employed the wealth of *England* in paying troops to defend mud-wall towns, and uninhabitable rocks, and in purchasing barriers for territories of which the natural sterility secured them from invasion.

This argument, which wants no particular instances to confirm it, is, I confess, of the greatest weight in this question, and inclines me strongly to believe that the benevolent author of this prediction must have been *born* a *Briton*.

The learned discoverer of the inscription was pleased to insist with great warmth upon the etymology of the word *Patria*, which signifying, says he, *the land of my father*, could be made use of by none, but such whose ancestors had resided here; but in answer to this demonstration, as he called it, I only desired him to take notice, how common it is for intruders of yesterday, to pretend the same title with the antient proprietors; and, having just received an estate by voluntary grant, to erect a claim of *hereditary right*.

Nor is it less difficult to form any satisfactory conjecture concerning the rank or condition of the writer, who, contented with a consciousness

of having done his duty, in leaving this solemn warning to his country, seems studiously to have avoided that veneration, to which his knowledge of futurity undoubtedly entitled him, and those honors which his memory might justly claim from the gratitude of posterity; and has therefore left no trace, by which the most sagacious and diligent inquirer can hope to discover him.

This conduct alone ought to convince us, that the prediction is of no small importance to mankind, since the author of it appears not to have been influenced by any other motive, than that noble and exalted philanthropy which is above the narrow views of recompense or applause.

That interest had no share in this inscription, is evident beyond dispute, since the age in which he lived received neither pleasure nor instruction from it. Nor is it less apparent, from the suppression of his name, that he was equally a stranger to that wild desire of fame, which has sometimes infatuated the noblest minds.

His modesty, however, has not been able wholly to extinguish that curiosity, which so naturally leads us, when we admire a performance, to inquire after the author. Those whom I have consulted on this occasion, and my zeal for the honor of this benefactor of my country

has not suffered me to forget a single antiquary of reputation, have almost unanimously determined, that it was written by a king. For, where else, said they, are we to expect that greatness of mind, and that dignity of expression, so eminently conspicuous in this inscription?

It is with a proper sense of the weakness of my own abilities, that I venture to lay before the public the reasons which hinder me from concurring with this opinion, which I am not only inclined to favor by my respect for the authors of it, but by a natural affection to monarchy, and a prevailing inclination to believe that every excellence is inherent in a king.

To condemn an opinion so agreeable to the reverence due to the regal dignity, and countenanced by so great authorities, without a long and accurate discussion, would be a temerity justly liable to the severest censures. A supercilious and arrogant determination of a controversy of such importance, would, doubtless, be treated by the impartial and candid with the utmost indignation.

But as I have too high an idea of the learning of my contemporaries, to obtrude any crude, hasty, or indigested, notions on the public, I have proceeded with the utmost degree of diffidence

and caution; I have frequently reviewed all my arguments, traced them backwards to their first principles, and used every method of examination to discover whether all the deductions were natural and just, and whether I was not imposed on by some specious fallacy; but, the farther I carried my inquiries, and the longer I dwelt upon this great point, the more was I convinced, in spite of all my prejudices, that this wonderful prediction was not written by a king.

For, after a laborious and attentive perusal of Histories, Memoirs, Chronicles, Lives, Characters, Vindications, Panegyrics, and Epitaphs, I could find no sufficient authority for ascribing to any of our *English* Monarchs, however gracious or glorious, any prophetical knowledge or prescience of futurity; which, when we consider how rarely regal virtues are forgotten, how soon they are discovered, and how loudly they are celebrated, affords a probable argument, at least, that none of them have laid any claim to this character. For why should historians have omitted to embellish their accounts with such a striking circumstance; or, if the histories of that age are lost by length of time, why was not so uncommon an excellence transmitted to posterity in the more lasting colors of poetry? Was that

unhappy age without a laureat? Was there then no *Young* or *Philips*, no *Ward* or *Mitchel*, to snatch such wonders from oblivion, and immortalize a prince of such capacities? If this were really the case, let us congratulate ourselves upon being reserved for better days, days so fruitful of happy writers, that no princely virtue can shine in vain. Our monarchs are surrounded with refined spirits, so penetrating that they frequently discover in their masters great qualities invisible to vulgar eyes, and which, did not they publish them to mankind, would be unobserved for ever.

Nor is it easy to find, in the lives of our monarchs, many instances of that regard for posterity, which seems to have been the prevailing temper of this venerable man. I have seldom, in any of the gracious speeches delivered from the throne, and received with the highest gratitude and satisfaction by both houses of parliament, discovered any other concern than for the current year, for which supplies are generally demanded in very pressing terms, and sometimes such as imply no remarkable solicitude for posterity.

Nothing indeed can be more unreasonable and absurd, than to require that a monarch, distracted with cares and surrounded with enemies,

should involve himself in superfluous anxieties by an unnecessary concern about future generations. Are not pretenders, mock patriots, masquerades, operas, birth-nights, treaties, conventions, reviews, drawing rooms, the births of heirs and the deaths of queens, sufficient to overwhelm any capacity but that of a king? Surely, he that acquits himself successfully of such affairs, may content himself with the glory he acquires, and leave posterity to his successors.

That this has been the conduct of most princes, is evident from the accounts of all ages and nations, and therefore I hope it will not be thought that I have, without just reasons, deprived this inscription of the veneration it might demand as the work of a king.

With what laborious struggles against prejudice and inclination, with what efforts of reasoning, and pertinacity of self-denial, I have prevailed upon myself to sacrifice the honor of this monument to the love of truth, none who are unacquainted with the fondness of a commentator will be able to conceive. But this instance will be, I hope, sufficient to convince the public that I write with sincerity, and that, whatever my success may be, my intentions are good.

Where we are to look for our author it still remains to be considered, whether in the high road of public employments, or the by-paths of private life.

It has always been observed of those that frequent a court, that they soon, by a kind of contagion, catch the regal spirit of neglecting futurity. The minister forms an expedient to suspend or perplex an inquiry into his measures for a few months, and applauds and triumphs in his own dexterity. The peer puts off his creditor for the present day, and forgets that he is ever to see him more. The frown of a prince and the loss of a pension have indeed been found of wonderful efficacy, to abstract men's thoughts from the present time, and fill them with zeal for the liberty and welfare of ages to come. But I am inclined to think more favourably of the author of this prediction, than that he was made a patriot by disappointment or disgust. If he ever saw a court, I would willingly believe, that he did not owe his concern for posterity to his ill reception there, but his ill reception there to his concern for posterity.

However, since truth is the same in the mouth of a hermit, or a prince; since it is not reason but weakness, that makes us rate counsel by our

esteem for the counsellor; let us at length desist from this inquiry, so useless in itself, in which we have room to hope for so little satisfaction. Let us show our gratitude to the author, by answering his intentions, by considering minutely the lines which he has left us, and examining their import without heat, precipitancy, or party-prejudices; let us endeavour to keep the just mean, between searching ambitiously for far-fetched interpretations, and admitting such low meaning, and obvious and low sense, as is inconsistent with those great and extensive views, which it is reasonable to ascribe to this excellent man.

It may be yet farther asked, whether this inscription, which appears in the stone, be an original, and not rather a version of a traditional prediction in the old *British* tongue, which the zeal of some learned man prompted him to translate and engrave in a more known language for the instruction of future ages; but, as the lines carry at the first view a reference both to the stone itself, and very remarkably to the place where it was found, I cannot see any foundation for such a suspicion.

It remains now that we examine the sense and import of the inscription, which, after having long dwelt upon it with the closest and most

laborious attention, I must confess myself not yet able fully to comprehend. The following explications, therefore, are by no means laid down as certain and indubitable truths, but as conjectures not always wholly satisfactory even to myself, and which I had not dared to propose to so enlightened an age, an age which abounds with those great ornaments of human nature, sceptics, anti-moralists, and infidels, but with hopes that they would excite some person of greater abilities, to penetrate farther into the oraculous obscurity of this wonderful prediction.

Not even the four first lines are without their difficulties, in which the time of the discovery of the stone seems to be the time assigned for the events foretold by it.

Cum Lapidem hunc, magni
Qui nunc jacet Incola stagni,
Vel Pede Equus tanget,
Vel Arator vomere franget,
Sentiet ægra Metus,
Effundet Patria Fletus,
Littoraque ut Fluctu,
Resonabunt Oppida Luctu.

Whene'er this stone, now hid beneath the lake,
The horse shall trample, or the plough shall break,

Then, O my country! shalt thou groan distrest,
Grief in thine eyes, and terror in thy breast;
Thy streets with violence of woe shall sound,
Loud as the billows bursting on the ground.

When this stone, says he, *which now lies hid beneath the waters of a deep lake, shall be struck upon by the horse or broken by the plough, then shalt thou, my country, be astonished with terrors, and drowned in tears; then shall thy towns sound with lamentations, as thy shores with the roarings of the waves.* These are the words literally rendered, but how are they verified? The lake is dry, the stone is turned up; but there is no appearance of this dismal scene. Is not all at home satisfaction and tranquility? all abroad, submission and compliance? Is it the interest or inclination of any prince or state to draw a sword against us? and are we not nevertheless secured by a numerous standing army, and a king who is himself an army? Have our troops any other employment than to march to a review? have our fleets encountered any thing but winds and worms? To me, the present state of the nation seems so far from any resemblance to the noise and agitation of a tempestuous sea, that it may be much more properly compared to the dead stillness of the waves before a storm.

Nam fœcunda rubri
Serpent per Patria Colubri,
Gramina vastantes,
Flores Fructusque vorantes,
Omnia fœdantes,
Vitiantes, et spoliantes;
Quanquam haud pugnaces,
Ibunt per cuncta Minaces,
Fures absque Timore,
Et pingues absque Labore.

Then through thy fields shall scarlet reptiles stray,
And rapine and pollution mark their way.
Their hungry swarms the peaceful vale shall fright,
Still fierce to threaten, still afraid to fight;
The teeming year's whole product shall devour,
Insatiate pluck the fruit, and crop the flow'r;
Shall glutton on the industrious peasant's spoil,
Rob without fear, and fatten without toil.

He seems in these verses to descend to a particular account of this dreadful calamity; but his description is capable of very different senses with almost equal probability.

Red Serpents, says he, (*rubri colubri* are the *Latin* words, which the poetical translator has rendered *scarlet reptiles*, using a general term for a particular, in my opinion, too licentiously,) *Red Serpents shall wander o'er her meadows and*

pillage and pollute, &c. The particular mention of the color of this destructive viper may be some guide to us in this labyrinth, through which, I must acknowledge, I cannot yet have any certain path. I confess, that when, a few days after my perusal of this passage, I heard of the multitude of lady-birds seen in *Kent*, I began to imagine that these were the fatal insects, by which the *Island* was to be laid waste; and therefore looked over all accounts of them with uncommon concern. But, when my first terrors began to subside, I soon recollected that these creatures, having both wings and feet, would scarcely have been called serpents; and was quickly convinced, by their leaving the country without doing any hurt, that they had no quality, but the color, in common with the ravagers here described.

As I am not able to determine any thing on this question, I shall content myself with collecting, into one view, the several properties of this pestiferous brood, with which we are threatened, as hints to more sagacious and fortunate readers, who, when they shall find any *red animal* that ranges uncontrouled over the country, and devours the labours of the trader, and the husbandman; that carries with it corruption, rapine,

pollution, and devastation; that threatens without courage, robs without fear, and is pampered without labour;—they may know that the prediction is completed. Let me only remark farther, that, if the stile of this as of all other predictions is figurative, the serpent, a wretched animal that crawls upon the earth, is a proper emblem of low views and self-interest, base submission, as well as of cruelty, mischief, and malevolence.

I cannot forbear to observe in this place, that, as it is of no advantage to mankind to be forewarned of inevitable and insurmountable misfortunes, the author probably intended to hint to his countrymen, the proper remedies for the evils he describes. In this calamity, on which he dwells longest, and which he seems to deplore with the deepest sorrow, he points out one circumstance which may be of great use to disperse our apprehensions, and awaken us from that panic which the reader must necessarily feel, at the first transient view of this dreadful description. These serpents, says the original, are *haud pugnaces*, of no fighting race: they will threaten, indeed, and hiss, and terrify the weak, and timorous, and thoughtless; but have no real courage or strength. So that the mischief done by them, their ravages, devastations,

and robberies, must be only the consequences of cowardice in the sufferers, who are harassed and oppressed only because they suffer it without resistance. We are therefore to remember, whenever the pest here threatened shall invade us, that submission and tameness will be certain ruin, and that nothing but spirit, vigilance, activity, and opposition, can preserve us from the most hateful and reproachful misery, that of being plundered, starved, and devoured, by vermin and by reptiles.

Horrida dementes
Rapiet Discordia gentes,
Plurima tunc Leges
Mutabit, plurima Reges,
Natio,

Then o'er the world shall discord stretch her wings,
Kings change their laws, and kingdoms change their kings.

Here the author takes a general survey of the state of the world, and the changes that were to happen about the time of the discovery of this monument, in many nations. As it is not likely that he intended to touch upon the affairs of other countries, any farther than the advantage of his own made it necessary, we may reasonably conjecture, that he had a full and distinct

view of all the negociations, treaties, confederacies, of all the triple and quadruple alliances, and all the leagues offensive and defensive, in which we were to be engaged, either as principals, accessories. or guarantees, whether by policy, or hope, or fear, or our concern for preserving the *balance of power*, or our tenderness for the liberties of *Europe*. He knew that our negociators would interest us in the affairs of the whole earth, and that no state could either rise or decline in power, either extend or lose its dominions, without affecting our politics and influencing our councils.

This passage will bear an easy and natural application to the present time, in which so many revolutions have happened, so many nations have changed their masters, and so many disputes and commotions are embroiling almost in every part of the world.

That almost every state in *Europe* and *Asia*, that is, almost every country then known, is comprehended in this prediction, may be easily conceived; but whether it extends to regions at that time undiscovered, and portends any alteration of government in Carolina and Georgia, let more able or more daring expositors determine.

——— *Conversa*
In Rabiem tunc contremet Ursâ
Cynthia,

The bear, enrag'd, th' affrighted moon shall dread;

The terror created to the moon by the anger of the bear, is a strange expression; but may perhaps relate to the apprehensions raised in the *Turkish* empire, of which a crescent, or new moon, is the imperial standard, by the increasing power of the empress of *Russia*, whose dominions lie under the northern constellation called the *bear*.

——— *Tunc latis*
Florebunt Lilia Pratis,

The lilies o'er the vales triumphant spread;

The lilies, borne by the kings of *France*, are an apt representation of that country; and their flourishing over wide extended valleys, seems to regard the new increase of the *French* power, wealth, and dominions, by the advancement of their trade, and the accession of *Lorain*. This is at the first view an obvious, but perhaps for that very reason not the true, inscription. How can we reconcile it with the following passage?

Nec fremere audebit
Leo, sed violare timebit,
Omnio consuetus
Populari Pascua lætus.

Nor shall the lion, wont of old to reign
Despotic o'er the desolated plain,
Henceforth th' inviolable bloom invade,
Or dare to murmur in the flow'ry glade;

In which the lion, that used at pleasure to lay the pastures waste, is represented as not daring to touch the lilies, or murmur at their growth; the lion, it is true, is one of the supporters of the arms of *England*, and may therefore figure our countrymen, who have in antient times made *France* a desert. But can it be said, that the lion dares not murmur or rage (for *fremere* may import both,) when it is evident that, for many years, this whole kingdom has murmured! however, it may be at present calm and secure, by its confidence in the wisdom of our politicians, and the address of our negociators.

Ante Oculos Natos
Calceatos et Cruciatos.
Jam feret ignavus,
Vetitâque Libidine pravus.

His tortur'd sons shall die before his face,
While he lies melting in a lewd embrace.

Here are other things mentioned of the lion, equally unintelligible, if we suppose them to be spoken of our nation; as, that she lies sluggish, and depraved with unlawful lusts, while his offspring is trampled and tortured before his eyes. But in what place can the *English* be said to be trampled or tortured? Where are they treated with injustice or contempt? What nation is there, from pole to pole, that does not reverence the nod of the *British* king? Is not our commerce unrestrained? Are not the riches of the world our own, do not our ships sail unmolested, and our merchants traffic in perfect security? Is not the very name of *England* treated by foreigners, in a manner never known before? Or, if some slight injuries have been offered, if some of our petty traders have been stopped, our possessions threatened, our effects confiscated, our flag insulted, or our ears cropped, have we lain sluggish and unactive? Have not our fleets been seen in triumph, at *Spithead!* did not *Hosier* visit the *Bastimentos*, and is not *Haddock* now stationed at *Port Mahon?*

En quoque quod Mirum,
Quod dicas denique dirum,

Sanguinem Equus sugit,
Neque Bellua victa remugit.

And yet, more strange! his veins a horse shall drain,
Nor shall the passive coward once complain.

It is farther asserted, in the concluding lines, that the horse shall suck the lion's blood. This is still more obscure than any of the rest; and, indeed, the difficulties I have met with ever since the first mention of the lion, are so many and great, that I had, in utter despair of surmounting them, once desisted from my design of publishing any thing upon this subject; but was prevailed upon by the importunity of some friends, to whom I can deny nothing, to resume my design; and I must own, that nothing animated me so much as the hope they flattered me with, that my essay might be inserted in the gazetteer, and so become of service to my country.

That a weaker animal should suck the blood of a stronger without resistance, is wholly improbable and inconsistent, with the regard for self-preservation, so observable in every order and species of beings. We must therefore ne-

cessarily endeavour after some figurative sense, not liable to so insuperable an objection.

Were I to proceed in the same tenor of interpretation, by which I explained the moon and the lilies, I might observe that a horse is borne in the arms of the house of H——. But, how then does the horse suck the lion's blood? Money is the blood of the body politic.—But my zeal for the present happy establishment will not suffer me to pursue a train of thought that leads to such shocking conclusions. The idea is detestable, and such as, it ought to be hoped, can enter into the mind of none but a violent republican, or bloody jacobite. There is not one honest man in the nation, unconvinced how weak an attempt it would be to endeavour to confute this insinuation. An insinuation which no party will dare to abet, and of so fatal and destructive a tendency, that it may prove equally dangerous to the author, whether true or false.

As, therefore, I can form no hypothesis on which a consistent interpretation may be built, I must leave these loose and unconnected hints entirely to the candour of the reader; and confess that I do not think my scheme of explication just, since I cannot apply it throughout the whole, without involving myself in difficulties

from which the ablest interpreter would find it no easy matter to get free.

Being therefore convinced, upon an attentive and deliberate review of these observations, and a consultation with my friends, of whose abilities I have the highest esteem, and whose impartiality, sincerity, and probity, I have long known and frequently experienced, that my conjectures are in general very uncertain, often improbable, and sometimes little less than apparently false, I was long in doubt, whether I ought not entirely to suppress them, and content myself with publishing, in the *Gazetteer*, the inscription, as it stands engraven on the stone, without translation or commentary, unless that ingenious and learned society should favor the world with their own remarks.

To this scheme, which I thought extremely well calculated for the public good, and therefore very eagerly communicated to my acquaintance and fellow students, some objections were started, which, as I had not foreseen, I was unable to answer.

It was observed, first, that the *daily dissertations* published by that fraternity are written with such profundity of sentiment, and filled with such uncommon modes of expression, as to

be themselves sufficiently unintelligible to vulgar readers, and that therefore the venerable obscurity of this prediction would much less excite the curiosity and awaken the attention of mankind, than if it were exhibited in any other paper, and placed in opposition to the clear and easy stile of an author generally understood.

To this argument, formidable as it was, I answered, after a short pause, that, with all proper deference to the great sagacity and advanced age of the objector, I could not but conceive that his position confuted itself; and that a reader of the *Gazetteer*, being, by his own confession, accustomed to encounter difficulties, and search for meaning where it was not easily to be found, must be better prepared than any other man, for the perusal of these ambiguous expressions. And that, besides, the explication of this stone, being a task, which nothing could surmount but the most acute penetration, joined with indefatigable patience, seemed in reality reserved for those who have given proofs of both in the highest degree, by reading and understanding the *Gazetteer*.

This answer satisfied every one but the objector, who, with an obstinacy not very uncommon, adhered to his own opinion, though he

could not defend it; and not being able to make any reply, attempted to laugh away my argument, but found the rest of my friends so little disposed to jest upon this important question, that he was forced to restrain his mirth, and content himself with a sullen and contemptuous silence.

Another of my friends, whom I had assembled on this occasion, having owned the solidity of my answer to the first objection, offered a second, which in his opinion could not be so easily defeated.

"I have observed," *says he*," that the essays in the *Gazetteer*, though written on very important subjects, by the ablest hands which ambition can incite, friendship engage, or money procure, have never, though circulated through the kingdom with the utmost application, had any remarkable influence upon the people. I know many persons of no common capacity, that hold it sufficient to peruse these papers four times a year; and others who receive them regularly, and without looking upon them, treasure them under ground for the benefit of posterity. So that the inscription may, by being inserted there, sink once more into darkness and oblivion, instead of informing the age, and assisting our

present ministry in the regulation of their measures."

Another observed, that nothing was more unreasonable than my hope, that any remarks or elucidations would be drawn up by that fraternity, since their own employments do not allow them any leisure for such attempts. Every one knows, that panegyric is in its own nature no easy task, and that to defend is much more difficult than to attack; consider, then, says he, what industry, what assiduity, it must require, to praise and vindicate a ministry like ours.

It was hinted by another, that an inscription which had no relation to any particular set of men amongst us, but was composed many ages before the parties, which now divide the nation, had a being, could not be so properly conveyed to the world by means of a paper, dedicated to political debates.

Another, to whom I had communicated my own observations in a more private manner, and who had inserted some of his own arguments, declared it as his opinion, that they were, though very controvertible and unsatisfactory, yet too valuable to be lost: and that, though to insert the inscription in a paper, of which such numbers are daily distributed at the expense of

the public, would doubtless be very agreeable to the generous design of the author, yet he hoped, that, as all the students, either of politics or antiquities, would receive both pleasure and improvement from the dissertation with which it is accompanied, none of them would regret to pay for so agreeable an entertainment.

It cannot be wondered, that I at last have yielded to such weighty reasons, and such insinuating compliments, and chosen to gratify at once the inclination of friends and the vanity of an author. Yet, I should think I had very imperfectly discharged my duty to my country, did I not warn all, whom either interest or curiosity shall incite to the perusal of this treatise, not to lay any stress upon my explications.

How a more complete and indisputable interpretation may be obtained, it is not easy to say. This will, I suppose, be readily granted, that it is not to be expected from any single hand, but from the joint inquiries and united labors of a numerous society of able men, instituted by authority, selected with great discernment and impartiality, and supported at the charge of the nation.

I am very far from apprehending, that any proposal for the attainment of so desirable an

end will be rejected by this inquisitive and enlightened age, and shall therefore lay before the public, the project which I have formed and matured by long consideration, for the institution of a society of commentators upon this inscription.

I humbly propose, that thirty, of the most distinguished genius, be chosen for this employment, half from the inns of court, and half from the army, and be incorporated into a Society for five years, under the name of the SOCIETY OF COMMENTATORS.

That great undertakings can only be executed by a great number of hands, is too evident to require any proof; and I am afraid all that read this scheme, will think that it is chiefly defective in this respect, and that, when they reflect how many commissioners were thought necessary at *Seville*, and that even their negociations entirely miscarried, probably for want of more associates, they will conclude that I have proposed impossibilities, and that the ends of the institution will be defeated by an injudicious and ill-timed frugality.

But if it be considered, how well the persons I recommend must have been qualified, by their education and profession, for the provinces as-

signed them, the objection will grow less weighty than it appears. It is well known to be the constant study of the lawyers, to discover, in acts of parliament, meanings which escaped the committees that drew them up, and the senates that passed them into laws, and to explain wills into a sense wholly contrary to the intention of the testator. How easily may an adept in these admirable and useful arts, penetrate into the most hidden import of this prediction? A man accustomed to satisfy himself with the obvious and natural meaning of a sentence, does not easily shake off his habit, but a true-bred lawyer never contents himself with one sense, when there is another to be found.

Nor will the beneficial consequences of this scheme terminate in the explication of this monument: they will extend much farther; for, the commentators having sharpened and improved their sagacity by this long and difficult course of study, will, when they return into public life, be of wonderful service to the government, in examining pamphlets, songs, and journals, and in drawing up informations, indictments, and instructions for special juries. They will be wonderfully fitted for the posts of attorney and so-

licitor general, but will excel, above all, as licensers for the stage.

The gentlemen of the army will equally adorn the province, to which I have assigned them, of setting the discoveries and sentiments of their associates in a clear and agreeable light. The lawyers are well known not to be very happy in expressing their ideas, being for the most part able to make themselves understood by none but their own fraternity. But the geniuses of the army have sufficient opportunities, by their free access to the levee and the toilet, their constant attendance at balls and assemblies, and that abundant leisure which they enjoy beyond any other body of men, to acquaint themselves with every new word and prevailing mode of expression, and to attain the utmost nicety and most polished prettiness of language.

It will be necessary, that, during their attendance upon the society, they be exempt from any obligation to appear on Hyde-Park; and that upon no emergency, however pressing, they be called away from their studies, unless the nation be in immediate danger, by an insurrection of weavers, colliers, or smugglers.

There may not, perhaps, be found in the army such a number of men, who have ever conde-

scended to pass through the labors and irksome forms of education, in use among the lower classes of people, or submitted to learn the mercantile and plebeian arts of writing and reading: I must own, that though I entirely agree with the notions of the uselessness of any such trivial accomplishments in the military profession, and of their inconsistency with more valuable attainments;—though I am convinced, that a man who can read and write becomes, at least, a very disagreeable companion to his brother soldiers, if he does not absolutely shun their acquaintance; that he is apt to imbibe, from his books, odd notions of liberty and independency, and even sometimes of morality and virtue, utterly inconsistent with the desirable character of a pretty gentleman;—though writing frequently stains the whitest finger, and reading has a natural tendency to cloud the aspect, and depress that airy and thoughtless vivacity, which is the distinguishing characteristic of a modern warrior;—yet, on this single occasion, I cannot but heartily wish, that by a strict search there may be discovered, in the army, fifteen men who can write and read.

I know that the knowledge of the alphabet is so disreputable among these gentlemen, that those who have by ill fortune formerly been

taught it, have partly forgot it by disuse, and partly concealed it from the world, to avoid the railleries and insults to which their education might make them liable. I propose, therefore, that all the officers of the army may be examined upon oath, one by one; and that, if fifteen cannot be selected, who are at present so qualified, the deficiency may be supplied out of those who, having once learned to read, may perhaps, with the assistance of a master, in a short time refresh their memories.

It may be thought, at the first sight of this proposal, that it might not be improper to assign to every commentator, a reader and secretary; but it may be easily conceived, that not only the public might murmur at such an addition of expense, but that, by the unfaithfulness or negligence of their servants, the discoveries of the society may be carried to foreign courts, and made use of to the disadvantage of our own country.

For the residence of this society, I cannot think any place more proper than *Greenwich* Hospital, in which they may have thirty apartments fitted up for them, that they may make their observations in private, and meet once a day, in the painted hall, to compare them.

If the establishment of this society be thought a matter of too much importance to be deferred till the new buildings are finished, it will be necessary to make room for their reception, by the expulsion of such of the seamen as have no pretensions to the settlements there, but fractured limbs, loss of eyes, or decayed constitutions, who have lately been admitted in such numbers, that it is now scarce possible to accommodate a nobleman's groom, footman, or postilion, in a manner suitable to the dignity of his profession, and the original design of the foundation.

The situation of *Greenwich* will naturally dispose them to reflection and study; and particular caution ought to be used, lest any interruption be suffered to dissipate their attention, or distract their meditations: for this reason, all visits and letters from ladies are strictly to be prohibited; and, if any of the members shall be detected with a lap-dog, pack of cards, box of dice, draught table, snuff-box, or looking-glass, he shall, for the first offence, be confined for three months to water gruel, and for the second, be expelled the society.

Nothing now remains, but that an estimate be made of the expenses necessary for carrying on this noble and generous design. The salary to

be allowed each professor cannot be less than £2000 a year, which is indeed more than the regular stipend of a commissioner of excise; but it must be remembered, that the commentators have a much more difficult and important employment, and can expect their salaries but for the short space of five years; whereas a commissioner (unless he imprudently suffers himself to be carried away by a whimsical tenderness for his country) has an establishment for life.

It will be necessary to allow the society in general, £30,000 yearly, for the support of the public table, and £40,000 for secret service.

Thus will the ministry have a fair prospect of obtaining the full sense and import of the prediction, without burthening the public with more than £650,000, which may be paid out of the sinking fund; or, if it be not thought proper to violate that sacred treasure, by converting any part of it to uses not primarily intended, may easily be raised by a general poll-tax, or excise upon bread.

Having now completed my scheme, a scheme calculated for the public benefit, without regard to any party, I entreat all sects, factions, and distinctions of men among us, to lay aside for a time their party-feuds and petty animosities, and

by a warm concurrence on this urgent occasion, teach posterity to sacrifice every private interest to the advantage of their country.

[The preceding Pamphlet, by Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON, was republished, in the year 1775, with the following Preface and Notes, under the signature of "TRIBUNUS;" which will be found an useful appendage at this distant period.]

PREFACE.

To Samuel Johnson, LL.D.

SIR,

I HAD lately the following curious essay put into my hands, by a particular friend; which, on account of its great singularity and scarcity, I wish to rescue from oblivion; and I know not how I can more effectually do this, than by connecting it with so great and illustrious a name, as your own; which I hope will not excite your anger, or incur your resentment, as it is my intention to vindicate you from a charge, that, considering the contents of the essay itself, and your particular political connections at this time, may be of infinite service, if not in augmenting your well earned PENSION, (if that word give not offence,) yet in preventing any diminution or total abolition of it.

So extraordinary a performance as the following is, could not fail to excite a very eager desire of knowing the author; when, to my great surprise, it was positively asserted to be the production of the masterly pen of Dr. Samuel Johnson.—I remonstrated, again and again, with my friend, upon the absurdity of the surmise; and pointed out innumerable passages, which I thought served to destroy his positive assertions. This only tended to increase his prejudices in favour of his own preconceptions, and confirm me in the resolution of republishing the essay, with such remarks as should invalidate every argument, and remove every suspicion, that savoured of its being the production of your pen: and, indeed, I flatter myself, that a shadow of doubt will not appear of your being the author of it, when the whole has been perused, and compared with those two inimitable and unanswerable pamphlets, with which you have obliged your royal master and our most gracious sovereign, and his able ministers; I mean, the "False Alarm;" and that most excellent vindication, entitled "Taxation no tyranny," of what the faction or whigs (which, by your excellent Dictionary, we are taught to be one and the same) call the most ominous system of

despotism, that this or any other free state ever saw planned, and which their fanatical zeal most religiously reprobates.

I urged in your vindication, learned sir, that it was impossible so pointed an attack on the glorious revolution; such bitter reflections, keen sarcasms, and personal invectives, against the illustrious HOUSE OF HANOVER, which are to be found in the following essay; could proceed from the pen of the now renowned champion for the honour and glory of one of the house of Brunswick; whose exaltation to the throne of these realms has ever been matter of the greatest distress, trouble, and disappointment, to Tories and Jacobites; neither of whom can ever discover zeal or attachment to any reigning monarch, unless the maxims of his government should be the same with those, which, in their warmest wishes, they would desire to see the cursed and expelled race of the STUARTS adopt and pursue. This, indeed, may gain a temporary allegiance, and procure an outward show of obedience, as it would not only gratify their high-flown extravagant notions of hereditary right and unlimited authority, but afford some distant prospect and hope, that a deviation from all principles and maxims, that first, in the opinion of the whigs,

vindicated the deposition of the STUARTS, and elevation of the house of Hanover, might, by a happy train of political consequences, restore the imperial diadem to that head, round which, every jacobite would wish to see it cast its hereditary splendour. No man can be hardy enough to impute to Dr. JOHNSON, wishes or expectations of such a nature,—more extravagant to his enlightened mind and loyal heart, than the doctrine of ghosts and phantoms, or the pretensions to second sight in the Highlands of Scotland; a country, whose poverty and barrenness you have, as a faithful historian, described and exposed, though treated with lettered hospitality, and partaking of every convenience that such a country could afford. Nor could you, sir, had you those predelictions in favour of the house of STUART, that some would suggest, have missed so fair an opportunity of crediting that country, for those illustrious names that swayed the sceptre in this.

The surmise, sir, that you are the author of the following essay, could only be designed to tarnish your unblemished reputation, or prejudice you in the opinion of your royal master, the friendly rays of whose favor and protection have beneficently shone upon your merit; not indeed

by its irradiations to make it more conspicuous;—that were impossible, so unrivalled is your fame; but to afford his affectionate subjects, indubitable proofs of his discernment and justice, of which, indeed, the far greater part of them require no other evidences than what his Majesty has already afforded.

And though the unsatisfied humours of some false pretenders to patriotism, have risen into ferments of opposition; and they have more than hinted at a breach of the royal oath, solemnly sworn at his Majesty's coronation; and talked of the absolute treason of ministers against the state,—representing the measures, respecting America, as open, violent, and audacious breaches of the most sacred part of the CONSTITUTION; augmenting the utter destruction of FREEDOM, and establishment of DESPOTISM: yet of these ominous fears and disastrous conjectures, we are happily freed by the late able vindication of these measures and ministers, in the late celebrated piece, entitled "TAXATION NO TYRANNY;"—wherein the charge of REBELLION is brought home against the Americans; and their struggles for what they call LIBERTY, proved to be the froward opposition of disobedient children, and rebellious insurrections against the PARENT

STATE.—We see all their pretended claims as natural free-born subjects, refuted.—We are peremptorily told by Dr. JOHNSON, that the Americans resigned all right and title to the name, character, and immunities, of true-born Englishmen, when they insolently fled from opposition and tyranny, which here they complained of, and would not patiently endure; and that they denuded themselves of all rights and just claims to privilege and protection, when their inflexible and pertinacious folly led them to a desert; and, that the Atlantic washed clear away every relict of free subjects.

We must now cease to pity their oppression, because you, sir, have proved them slaves; their complaints must be deemed the voice of sedition, because Dr. JOHNSON declares their resistance REBELLION.—Let us leave, then, America to mourn her fate, which the high-born spirit of her yet untamed sons seems determined, if possible, to retard by resolute opposition and bold encounter, in which some turbulent and equally rebellious sons at home, with anxious and forward zeal, wish them success; and congratulate our native country, that has such a pious and ever watchful guardian on the throne, and such ministers surrounding it, who are determined at all

events, and at every desperate hazard, to sacrifice all, even our own children, before one branch of the royal prerogative shall be lost, the omnipotence of parliament questioned, or the grandeur of the British empire impaired.

Can it remain a question, that the strenuous vindicator of the honour of the English crown, now worn by one of the illustrious house of Hanover, is the author of the essay in debate? or that you, sir, would receive a pension from that hand, which, according to the essayist, must sway the sceptre of USURPATION? The degeneracy of the present times, though the dregs of Rome, will not allow of a suspicion that implies such a profligacy of mind, corruption of manners, and destitution of principles.

The arguments I farther urged to disprove the assertion that you, sir, was the author of the following essay, were, that from the direct attack upon the Hanover succession, and invectives against the illustrious progenitors of our most gracious sovereign, it is manifest that the essayist was a high-flown jacobite, and really wrote upon principle; which he seems openly to avow, by the signature he assumes, of PROBUS BRITANICUS. Now, said I, can the very enemies of Dr. JOHNSON suppose that he could have

been the author of the essay, and yet, in so public and daring a manner, renounce every principle therein adopted and inferred? Can it be imagined, that his probity and honor were so unstable and pliable, as to become the easy purchase of the first state corrupter that should assail his virtue? Or is it probable that he should revolt from the glaring principles of jacobitism, (if ever he had adopted them,) which your staunch tories hold with equal faith as they do their bibles, and which they defend with apostolic zeal?—If, said I, the doctor had ever taken up this creed, I am thoroughly convinced that no consideration in the world would ever have induced him to discard it; he is pertinacious almost to a fault; and so fully convinced of his own tenets, that his best friends cannot produce one instance of his conviction. All the insinuations, that the doctor's former political principles leaned towards jacobitism, are refuted by the forward zeal he has shewn, and affection he has discovered, for his present Majesty and the righteous administration of his government. And if the story be true, (which I think much to be questioned,) that Dr. JOHNSON once refused to walk in the royal gardens, because in possession of an Usurper, yet it does not appear to

have been in the present reign ; and the elegant poem of London, the production of this learned man, gives us a true picture of his mind, at least in the last.

Here let those reign whom PENSIONS *can invite*
To vote a Patriot black, a Courtier white ;
Explain their Country's dear-bought rights away,
And plead for Pirates in the face of day;
With slavish tenets taint our poison'd youth,
And lend a lie the confidence of truth.

Thus driven out of every strong hold of argument and defence, my friend, sir, had recourse to those definitions of PENSION and PENSIONER, which have been so often bandied about, and to be found inscribed on that collossean column of fame, your Dictionary; and gravely read from it, the two following articles of your impeachment.

PENSION.—An allowance made to any one without an equivalent: in England, it is generally understood to mean, pay given to a state-hireling for treason to his country.

PENSIONER.—A slave of state, hired by a stipend to obey his master.

These read ; with an air of triumph, he ex-

claimed—"Now vindicate the doctor, if you can." The word equivalent gave the turn to my plea, and I peremptorily declared, that in the very sense of the lexicographer, his Majesty's bounty to you, sir, was not a pension; since it must first be proved, that his Majesty is your master, and acknowledged such by you; and that you obey him.—I next urged, that you had given him an AMPLE equivalent for royal munificence.—"What!" replied he, with great quickness, "by giving up, in return, honour, character, conscience, and every thing that should distinguish a man!"

To such the plunder of the land is given,
When crimes inflame the wrath of angry heaven!
POEM OF LONDON.

I answered this exclamatory interrogation, only with a smile of ineffable contempt.—As to the latter part of the description, viz. that a pension is generally understood, in ENGLAND, to mean pay given to a state-hireling for treason to his country, I replied—suppose DR. JOHNSON, or myself, choose to take the words in the Scotish acceptation of them; and, if the idea of a state-hireling in that country doth

not materially differ from that received in our own, the idea of TREASON doth, or at least hath done, most essentially.

Thus, sir, having I hope fully and unanswerably confuted the invidious charge, that you are the author of the following essay, and put it out of all doubt, or even a question, that you can be PROBUS BRITANICUS, I humbly take my leave; careless on whom the charge or guilt may fall, now I have exculpated you: for I had no other design in view, than to do justice to your super-eminent merit and abilities, and to shew you to the public in your true character; nor am I conscious of the least tincture of pride, mixing itself with this pure design; no, not even the distant emulation with our most gracious sovereign, whose high example and illustrious virtues I hope I shall never have the temerity or daring ambition to imitate. In you, sir, his present Majesty finds a firm, steady, and able, advocate for the House of Brunswick, and consequently deems you as good a friend as he himself wishes to the glorious revolution;—a period, the blessings of which we almost cease to rejoice at, as they are nearly eclipsed by those manifold blessings we enjoy, under the mild and auspicious reign of GEORGE THE THIRD; a prince, who

hath concentered in himself such rare qualities, that I will be bold enough to declare, he hath such a possession of the affections of the good people of England, and all true friends of the constitution, that they cannot love and revere him more.

I am, with the profoundest respect
and highest veneration,
very learned sir,
your most obedient and
most humble servant,
TRIBUNUS.

NOTES.

Page 8, line 12.

"Like the *Saxons* of old, they came only to plunder it."

The *Scotch* affect this, under these circumstances, at this very time.

Page 8, last line.

"Been naturalized and assimilated."

This, perhaps, will account for the extraordinary gratitude and affection, discovered by our present gracious sovereign: but the inuendo, and coarse compliment to his royal predecessors, plainly prove that this could *not* have been written by *Dr. Johnson,* who is so remarkable for politeness and courtly manners.

Page 9, line 8.

"Of which the natural sterility secured them from invasion."

The Electorate of *Hanover* is not remarkable for well-built towns, fertile fields, or waving harvests.

N.B. *Dr. Johnson* has made the like observations on *Scotland*, in his voyage to the *Hebrides*.

Page 9, line 24.

"Claim of *hereditary right*."

Could the defenders of the illustrious house of *Hanover* ever have pensioned such a jacobitical libeller of the first illustrious heroes of the *Brunswick* line?

Page 11, line 13.

"Every excellence is inherent in a king."

Without yielding, in the least, to the suspicion that *Dr. Johnson* is the author of this Essay, we may venture to suggest, that perhaps the doctor's loyalty may be owing to such a predilection in favour of monarchy.

Page 12, line 6.

"By some specious fallacy."

I wish, said my friend, invidiously, that *Dr. Johnson* had proceeded with the same caution and diffidence, had reviewed his arguments, and traced out his first principles, &c. before he had sent forth into the world his "FALSE ALARM," and "TAXATION NO TYRANNY."

Page 13, line 24.

"No remarkable solicitude for posterity."

Had the author lived in good GEORGE the Third's reign, he must have altered his opinion, as he would have seen *such* economy in the prince in the expenditure, and *such* modesty in the prime minister in raising the supplies, with such *remarkable* solicitude for posterity, that the happiness of the *present* age seems almost totally neglected.

Page 15, line 16.

"Zeal for the liberty and welfare of ages to come."

This could never have been written by *Dr. Samuel Johnson;* his experience would have set the remark in the following order: the smiles of a Prince, and the *enjoyment of a pension,* have been found of wonderful efficacy to *fix* men's thoughts on the present times and measures, be they ever so profligate and ruinous; and to *fill* them with zeal in support of them, regardless of ages to come.

Page 22, line 10.

"And devoured, by vermin and by reptiles."

To impute such sentiments as these, so highly injurious to the gentlemen of the sword, from whose spirit and activity *Dr. Johnson* and *Lord North* expect the total subduction of *America,* to this ingenious writer, would be a manifest injustice and absurdity. I chuse to mention this particularly, because I should think the writer's *nose,* if not his *life,* would stand but a bad chance from some of our military gentry.

Page 28, line 20.

"Dangerous to the author, whether true or false."

Could the author of the "FALSE ALARM," and "TAXATION NO TYRANNY," be ever supposed to have written this virulent attack?—No! Conjecture itself is put to flight.

Page 32, line 12.

"Vindicate a ministry like ours."

If this had been written by *Dr. Johnson*, it could not have failed, long ago, to have been turned against him by some of his adversaries; and, indeed, it would have been a difficult thrust to have parried, or a hard stroke to have borne.

Page 32, line 26.

"Insert the inscription in a paper."

The paper here alluded to, and so frequently mentioned in this pamphlet, was called the *Gazetteer*. It was published at a heavy and unpardonable public expense, for the base purpose of defending the measures of *Sir Robert Walpole*, in parliament. The best writers, the *Johnsons* of his time, were paid and *pensioned* by government, for their essays written in praise of a prostituted premier and his tools.

Page 37, line 24.

"In the army, fifteen men who can write and read."

Considering the *great* dependence upon the army, and the *frequent* reviews which his Majesty delights to take of

his troops, together with *Dr. Johnson's present* pay and *good* quarters, I wish he would exculpate himself from the charge of being the writer of this pamphlet, under his own hand and proper signature. I am afraid, his reputation may suffer under my unskilful vindication.

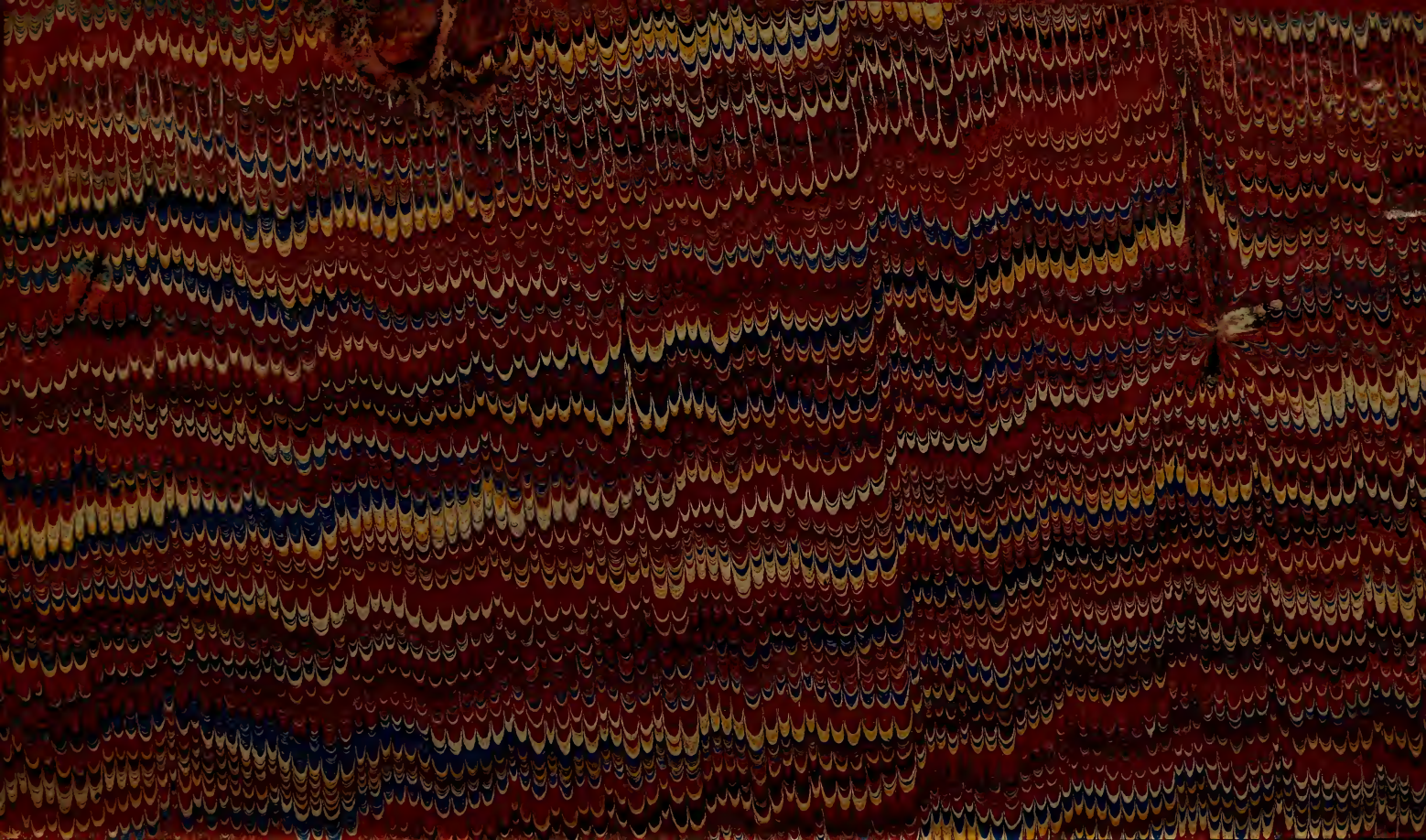
Page 40, line 17.

"Which may be paid out of the sinking fund."

I wonder, says my friend, from *what* fund the doctor's pension is derived!—The privy purse, replied I.—From *whence* is that filled? quoth he.—There is no end in answering such questions, said I.—Thus disputing every inch of ground, and fighting all the lines through, of this extraordinary political field, I put my adversary to flight; not without some distant hopes of being noticed by the learned and ingenious doctor in his next patriotic publication, or receiving myself some beneficent token of royal favor and protection, to which, with all modesty, I think myself as *much* entitled, as *some* whom the king, in the exuberance of his bounty, hath delighted to honor.

THE END.

Maurice, Printer, Fenchurch-street.



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